Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 1-26. (Canceled).

- 27. (Currently Amended) A depolarizer with three birefringent plates, as in claim 26 where the thicknesses of the plates are in a [[the]] ratio of 1:3:9.
- 28. (Currently Amended) A depolarizer with three birefringent plates, as in claim 26 where the thicknesses of the plates are in a [[the]] ratio of 4:3:9.
- 29. (Currently Amended) A depolarizer with three birefringent plates, as in claim 26 where the angle between two of the plates is substantially $n\frac{\pi}{2} \pm \arccos(-1/3)/4$, where n is an integer.
- 30. (Currently Amended) A depolarizer with three birefringent plates, as in claim 26 where the angle between two of the plates is substantially $\left(n + \frac{1}{2}\right)\frac{\pi}{2}$ where n is an integer.

Claims 31-32. (Canceled).

- 33. (Previously Presented) A depolarizer as in claim 27 where the order of the three plates is selected such that at least one retardance frequency vanishes in a first quadrant.
- 34. (Previously Presented) A depolarizer as in claim 28 where the order of the three plates is selected such that at least one retardance frequency vanishes in a first quadrant.

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- 35. (Previously Presented) A depolarizer as in claim 27 where the thicknesses of the three plates are selected such that the plate of intermediate thickness is positioned between the remaining two plates.
- 36. (Previously Presented) A depolarizer as in claim 28 where the thicknesses of the three plates are selected such that the plate of least thickness is positioned between the remaining two plates.
- 37. (New) A depolarizer as in claim 27 where each of the birefringent plates has an ordinary axis, each birefringent plate having a substantially different rotation angle of the respective ordinary axis.
- 38. (New) A depolarizer as in claim 28 where each of the birefringent plates has an ordinary axis, each birefringent plate having a substantially different rotation angle of the respective ordinary axis.
- 39. (New) A depolarizer as in claim 29 where the thicknesses of the plates are in a ratio of 1:3:9.
- 40. (New) A depolarizer as in claim 30 where the thicknesses of the plates are in a ratio of 1:3:9.
- 41. (New) A depolarizer as in claim 29 where the thicknesses of the plates are in a ratio of 4:3:9.
- 42. (New) A depolarizer as in claim 30 where the thicknesses of the plates are in a ratio of 4:3:9.